

# VINYL COAT ENDS CHOPPER 'DUST-OFFS'

The Navy has discovered a solution to the problem of dust raised by military helicopter operations — a solution that may reap benefits outside the Navy.

Scientists at the Naval Weapons Center (NWC), China Lake, Calif., under a project sponsored by the Navy science assistance program, have been investigating ways to prevent the dust clouds which often form during helicopter landings in field operations. These clouds cause damage to engines and create a visual signature that may draw hostile fire.

After experimenting with various ground coatings, scientists at NWC found that a polyvinyl acetate and water emulsion, which can be applied by a hose, keeps dust down and is impermeable to water. So far, the test pad at China Lake has withstood more than a year's weather without damage.

Since the polyvinyl acetate solution is non-toxic, it poses no problem to the environment. The landing pad can be ripped up and pulverized when no longer needed.

In addition to solving the problem of helicopter dust, the new emulsion can be used in surfacing dirt roads or banks and hillsides to prevent erosion and mudslides.

Surfacing dry lake beds or other depressions with the substance can form effective water reservoirs. Since no chemical action takes place between the water and treated ground, the water would remain pure.

Scientists also discovered that a dramatic improvement in the quality of concrete occurred when the polyvinyl acetate was added with the cement. The resulting concrete does not deteriorate rapidly, even in salt water, is stronger than regular concrete and up to 10 times as flexible.

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